

Date: January 3, 2001

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Revised: May 30, 2002

PO01 - 035 INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY OFFICE CLOSURES**DISCUSSION**

From time to time, unforeseen circumstances, such as snowstorms or power failures, make it difficult for employees to get to work and may require the closure of a department office or work site. This policy provides guidance for managers and employees regarding what employees should do and how they should account for their time when the office or work site is inaccessible or closed because of inclement weather or other emergency.

POLICY**Tardiness and Leave Due to Inclement Weather When the Office or Work Site Remains Open**

An employee may be up to one hour late arriving at work because of severe inclement weather. Tardiness beyond one hour requires authorized leave.

If the employee is absent all day, the employee must request authorized leave for the entire day. If the employee leaves work early, in anticipation of, or because of bad weather, the employee must request authorized leave. Non-scheduled, exempt, and exceptions work period employees may adjust their work schedules to accommodate inclement weather or other emergency.

To account for tardiness beyond one hour or for an absence of an entire day, the employee must take and exhaust accrued paid leave, in the following order:

1. Any earned compensatory time, or exchange time;
2. Any accrued vacation leave;
3. Accrued sick leave (up to three days in a calendar year).

As necessary and otherwise at the discretion of the employee, the employee shall be authorized leave without pay rather than paid leave.

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Office Closure

The responsibility for closing any DNR office rests with the Commissioner of Public Lands or the designee. In order to make this determination, the Region/Division Manager or designee should provide the following information to the Commissioner or designee:

- Safety or health problems that could result from employees staying at work (e.g., lack of heat);
- Safety or health problems that could result from employees leaving work (e.g., snow bound on roads);
- Anticipated length of the power outage;
- Whether telephones or other equipment are working;
- Feasibility of employees continuing to work.

If telephone service is intact, supervisors must keep enough staff at the office to answer calls during normal business hours, unless there is a safety or health hazard.

Office Closure and Working at an Alternative Work Site

If the office or work site is closed due to inclement weather, or in other emergency situations, the Region or Division Manager can direct an employee to work at an alternative work site or at home.

Non-scheduled, exempt, and exceptions work period employees may adjust their work schedules. In the case of non-scheduled work period employees, such adjustments must be made within the authorized 40-hour workweek. Scheduled work period employees cannot adjust their hours. As a last resort, an employee may be directed to be available at an alternative work site, such as the employee's home, during scheduled work hours to receive further direction.

Office Closure and Employee Pay in the Event of Prolonged Emergencies

This section applies to employees who are sent home and directed to be available during scheduled work hours to receive further direction.

POLICY MANUAL

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Employees who are not needed to remain at the work site to respond to an emergency should be sent home and instructed to remain available to receive further direction during scheduled work hours. Technically, permanent state employees who are prevented from working because their work location is closed or partially closed are subject to a reduction-in-force due to curtailment of work. WAC 356-30-330 requires that a permanent employee be given 15 days notice prior to layoff. When it is not possible to comply with this notice provision, DNR will pay its permanent employees for the time they were prevented from working due to the closure. Temporary employees will be paid until they receive one day's notice that they are being laid off and taken off the payroll. Exempt-employees will be paid until they receive notice that they are being laid off and taken off the payroll. Intermittent employees will not be scheduled for work.

There is no authority to provide extra compensation for employees who work their normal hours during this disruption. Employees on authorized leave during an office closure remain on authorized leave.

IMPLEMENTATION

The ~~Employee Services~~ **Human Resources** Division Manager, in consultation with the department Supervisor, is responsible for the uniform interpretation and application of this policy. Division and Region Managers are responsible to ensure employee compliance with this policy.

Approval Date: January 4, 2001

Approved By: /S/

JENNIFER M. BELCHER
Commissioner of Public Lands

Approval Date: January 4, 2001

Approved By: /S/

KALEEN COTTINGHAM
Supervisor

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SEE ALSO

WAC 356-18-115 - Leave Due To Inclement Weather

WAC 356-18-060(8) - Paid Sick Leave-Use

WAC 356-30-330 - Reduction In Force-Reasons, Regulations-Procedure

WAC 356-30-100 - Termination of Temporary Employment-Notice

Emergency Management Plan, Appendix E

Emergency Management Packet

~~Employee Services~~ **Human Resources** Information Sheet - Inclement Weather, Leave, and Closing Workplaces